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HUMBUG.

If the reader's attention is now called to it for the first time, he will be rather surprised, we dare say, to find how much humbug is incorporated with our social system. It will rather surprise him to find, as a little reflection will certainly enable him to do, that humbug forms, in fact, the cement by which society is held together; that it pervades every department of it, fills up all its crevices and crannies, and, in truth, permeates its very substance. We, in short, all humbug one another; that's beyond all manner of doubt.

Don't we every day write cards and letters beginning with "My dear, or My very dear sir," and ending with, "Yours sincerely, truly, &c. &c.," knowing, in our conscience, that in ninety-nine instances out of the hundred—always excepting cases where a man's *interest* is concerned—we do not care one straw for these very dear sirs—not one farthing although they were six feet below the ground to-morrow.

Suppose an intimation card of the death of one of these very dear sirs, or of some "good friend" or intimate acquaintance, waits us on our arrival home to dinner.

"Guess who's dead?" says some member of our family, running towards us with joyful anticipation of our perplexity.

"Can't say, indeed," reply we. "Who is it?"

"Mr O'Madigan."

"Ah, dear me, poor fellow, is he dead? Very sudden, very unexpected.—Is dinner ready?"

What is the civility of the landlord and his waiters but humbug? What the smirking, smiling, ducking and bowing of the shopkeeper, but humbug? What his sweet and gentle "yes, sirs," and "no, sirs," and "proud to serve you, sirs," but humbug? You are not goose enough to believe for a moment that he is serious, that he has either the least regard or respect for you. Not he; he would not care a twopenny although you were hanged, drawn, and quartered before his shop-door to-morrow, except, perhaps, for the inconvenience of the thing.

What is the civility of the servant to his employer but humbug? Do you imagine for a moment that that man who, hat in hand, is looking up to you with such a respectful air—looking up to you as if you were a god—as if his very existence depended on your slightest breath—do you imagine for a moment, we ask, that he has in his heart that deference for you that he would make you believe? that he conceives you to be so very superior a being as his manner would imply? Not he, indeed. Depend upon it, it is all humbug; humbug all. And if you saw or heard him when he feels secure that you can do neither the one nor the other, you would speedily be convinced that it is.

But it is in the wheel-within-wheel of social life, the domestic circle, in what are called the friendly relations of life, that the system of humbug assumes, perhaps, its most deceptive character. See what a loving and friendly set of people are gathered together around that dinner table! See how blandly, how affectionately they look on each other! How delighted they are with one another—with mine host and hostess in particular! Why, they would die for them—die on the spot. They would go any length to serve one another. See that shake of the hand, how cordial it is! that smile, how affectionate! how winning! how full of kindly promise! Now, do these people in reality feel the smallest interest in each other's welfare? Would they make the slightest sacrifice to serve one another? Not they, indeed. If you doubt it, try any one of them next day; try any of your "dear friends" if they will lend you a pound or five, as the case may be. Until you do this, or something like it, depend upon it you don't know your men; no, nor your women either.

"Oh! but," says the moralist, "mere civility, my good sir, mere civility; absurd idea to suppose that every man to whom you are civil should have a claim also on your purse."

"But in the case of a 'dear friend,' Mr Moralist, or intimate acquaintance—eh?—for it is of them only that I speak. Surely they might do something for you."

"Oh! that as it may be. But as a general rule"—

"Then all this cordiality of greeting, this affectionate shaking of hands, these sweet smiles and sweeter words, are all to go for nothing? They are to be understood as meaning nothing."

"Certainly."

"Then we are perfectly agreed—it is all deception."

"Oh! you may call it what you please."

"Thank you. Then with your leave I shall call it humbug. It is not a very elegant word, but it is pretty expressive."

But, lo! here comes a funeral. See how grave and holy these sable-clad gentlemen look. Why, you would grieve that under that dismal pall lay all the earthly hope every individual present, that every heart in the solemn was well-nigh broken. All this is very becoming no do and it would scarcely be decorous to go either singing laughing along the streets on such an occasion, when carry the poor remains of mortality to its last resting-place. B it's humbug, nevertheless—humbug all! Not one of these sorrowing mourners, excepting perhaps one or two of the nearest relations, cares one twopenny piece for the defunct. Not one of them would have given him sixpence to keep him from starving.

Notwithstanding, however, the very general diffusion of humbug, it may be classed under regular heads, and we rather think this would not be a bad way of illustrating it. We shall try; beginning with

THE MILITARY OR HEROIC HUMBUG.

My brave fellow soldiers, we are now on the eve of encountering the enemy. See, there he stands in hostile array against you. He thinks to terrify you by his formidable appearance. But you regard him with a steady and a fearless eye.

Soldiers! the world rings with the fame of your deeds. Your glory is imperishable: it will live for ever.

Regardless of wounds and death, you have ever been foremost where honour was to be won. Recollect, then, your ancient fame, and let your deeds this day show that you are still the same brave men who have so often chased your enemies from the field; the same brave men who have ever looked on death as a thing unworthy a moment's consideration—on dishonour as the greatest of all evils.

Band of heroes, advance! On, on to victory, death, wounds, glory, honour, and immortality! (Hurra, hurra, General Fudge for ever!—lead us on, general, lead us on!) Lead ye on, my brave fellows! Would to heaven my duties would permit me that enviable honour! But it would be too much for one so unworthy. Alas! I dare not. My duties call me to another part of the field. I obey the call with reluctance. But my confidence in your courage, my brave fellows, enables me to trust you to advance yourselves. On, then, on, my band of heroes, and fear nothing! (General raises his hat gracefully, bows politely to his "band of heroes," and rides off to a height at a safe distance, from which he views the battle comfortably through his telescope.)

THE LITERARY HUMBUG—THE AUTHOR'S.

In putting this work into the hands of the public, the author has not been influenced by any of those motives that usually urge writers to publication. Neither vanity, nor the desire of gaining what is called a name, has had the slightest share in inducing him to take this step; still less has he been influenced by any sordid love of gain; he looks for neither praise nor profit. His sole motive for writing and publishing this book has been to promote the general good, by contributing his mite to the stock of general information.

The author is but too well aware that the merits of his work, if indeed it have any at all, are of a very humble order; that it has, in short, many defects: but a liberal, discerning, and indulgent public, will make every allowance for one who makes no pretension to literary excellence.

The author may add, that part of the blame of his now obtruding himself on the public rests on the urgent entreaties of some perhaps too partial friends.

THE PUBLISHERS' HUMBUG.

The publishers of this new undertaking have long been of opinion that a new and more efficient course of moral instruction was wanted, to raise the bulk of mankind to that standard of perfection which every Christian, every good member of society, must be desirous of seeing attained.

It is with the most poignant regret they have marked the almost total failure of all preceding attempts of this kind. How much it has pained them—how much they have grieved to see the inadequacy of the supplies of knowledge to the increasing wants of the community, especially alluding to the working and lower classes generally, whose interests they have deeply at heart, they need not say: but they may say, that they anticipate the most triumphant success in their present efforts to supply the desideratum alluded to.

The publishers may add, that as regards the undertaking they are now about to commence, profit is with them but a secondary consideration. Their great object is to promote the

l good by a wide *diffusion* of knowledge, and a liberal
on of sound and healthy principle. If they effect this,
and is gained. The work, on which no expense will be
d, will be sold at a price so low as to leave but a bare
neration for workmanship and material—so low, indeed,
a very large demand only can protect the publishers
n positive loss. But it is not the dread of even the result
can deter them from commencing and carrying on a work
ndertaken from the purest and most disinterested motives.

THE CRITICAL HUMBUG.

A more delightful work than this, a work more rich and racy, more brilliant in style or more graphic in delineation, it has rarely been our good fortune to meet with. Every page bears the stamp of a master-mind, every sentence the impress of genius.

What a flow of ideas! What an outpouring of eloquence! What a knowledge of the human heart with all its nicer intricacies! What an intimacy with the springs of human action! What a mastery over the human passions! Ay, this is indeed the triumph of genius.

The author of this exquisite production writes with the pen of a Junius, and thinks with the intellect of a Bacon or a Locke. His language is forcible and epigrammatic, his reasoning clear and profound; yet can nothing be more racy than his pleasantry when he condescends to be playful—nothing more delicately cutting than his irony when he chooses to be satirical—nothing more striking or impressive than his rationalisation when he prefers being philosophical.

We confidently predict a wide and lasting popularity for this extraordinary production. Indeed, if we are not greatly mistaken, it will create quite a sensation in the literary circles of Europe.

PATRIOTIC HUMBUG.

My country, oh! my country! it is for thee, for thee alone, I live; and for thee, my country, will I at any time cheerfully die—(Who's that calling out fudge?) Nearest my heart is the wish for thy welfare. To see thee happy is the one only desire of my soul, and that thou mayest be so, is my constant prayer.

Night and day dost thou engross my thoughts, and all, all would I sacrifice to thy welfare! My private interests are as dust: in the balance—(Who's that again calling fudge?—turn him out, turn him out)—My private interests are as dust in the balance; and shame, shame, oh! eternal shame to the sordid wretch, unworthy to live, who should for a moment prefer his individual aggrandisement to his country's good. Perish his name—perish the name of the miserable miscreant!

Wealth! what is wealth to me, my country, compared to thy happiness? **Station!** what is station, unless thou, too, art advanced? **Power!** what is power, unless the power of doing thee good? **Oh, my country!** My country, oh!—(Oh! oh! oh! from various parts of the house.) The patriot sits down, wiping his patriotic forehead with a white handkerchief, amidst thunders of applause.

Before going farther with our Illustrations—indeed we don't know whether we shall go any farther with them at all or not, as we rather think we have given quite enough of them—before going farther, then, with any thing in the more direct course of our subject, we may pause a moment to remark how carefully every one who comes before the public to claim its patronage, conceals the real object of his doing so. How remorse he keeps from this very delicate point ! He never whispers its name—never breathes it. How cautiously he avoids all allusion to his own particular interest in the matter ! From the union with which he speaks of the excellences of the thing he has to dispose of, be it what it may, a Dutch cheese or a treatise on philosophy, the enthusiasm with which he dwells on them, you would imagine that he spoke out of a pure feeling of admiration of these excellences. You would never dream—for this he carefully conceals from you—that his sole object is to get hold of as much of your cash as he can ; the Dutch cheese or the treatise on philosophy being a mere instrument to accomplish the desired transfer.

It is rather a curious feature this in the social character: every thing offered for sale is so offered through a pure spirit of benevolence, either for the public good or individual benefit; nothing for the sake of mere filthy lucre, or the particular interest of the seller—not at all. He, good soul, has no such motive—not he, indeed.

We said a little while since that we doubted whether we would give any farther illustrations of the great science of

humbug. We have now made up our minds that we shall not. Although we could easily give fifty more, it is unnecessary.

We confess, however, to be under strong temptations to give "the candidate's humbug"—to exhibit that gentleman *doing over* the constituency, making them, whether he be whig or tory, swallow the grossest fudge that ever was thrust down an unsuspecting gullet; but we refrain. We refrain also, in the meantime, from giving what we would call "the liberty and equality humbug;" together with several other humbogs equally instructive and edifying.

And now we think we hear our readers exclaim of ourselves, what a humbug!

By no means, gentle readers; there are exceptions to every general rule. We have sketched the great mass of mankind, but we have no doubt that there are some truly sincere persons—few indeed—in all the classes we have sketched; and we trust that we ourselves shall be reckoned amongst the number.

ANCIENT IRISH LITERATURE,

NUMBER I.

THE ancient literature of Ireland is as yet but little known to the world, or even to ourselves. Existing for the most part only in its original Celtic form, and in manuscripts accessible only to the Irish scholar resident in our metropolis, but few even of those capable of understanding it have the opportunity to become acquainted with it, and from all others it is necessarily hidden. We therefore propose to ourselves, as a pleasing task, to make our literature more familiar, not only to the Irish scholar, but to our readers generally who do not possess this species of knowledge, by presenting them from time to time with such short poems or prose articles, accompanied with translations, as from their brevity, or the nature of their subjects, will render them suitable to our limited and necessarily varied pages—our selections being made without regard to chronological order as to the ages of their composition, but rather with a view to give a general idea of the several kinds of literature in which our ancestors of various classes found entertainment.

The specimen which we have chosen to commence with is of a homely cast, and was intended as a rebuke to the saucy pride of a woman in humble life, who assumed airs of consequence from being the possessor of three cows. Its author's name is unknown, but its age may be determined, from its language, as belonging to the early part of the seventeenth century; and that it was formerly very popular in Munster, may be concluded from the fact, that the phrase, Easy, oh, woman of the three cows! [30 *peir a bhean na ttri mhó*] has become a saying in that province, on any occasion upon which it is desirable to lower the pretensions of proud or boastful persons. P.

BE21N N2 TTRJ 2HBO.

Do péid a bean na trí mbó
 Ar to bólaacht ná bí teann
 Do éonairc meiri, gan gó,
 Bean ir ba dá mó a beann.

Ηί μαιπεανν ραιόβριον το γνύτ
 Οο νεαί ná ταβαιρ τάρ το μόρ
 Chúgat an téag ar gaí taoð
 Το πείο α βεαν na τπρί mbό.

Σλιοὺς Εὐχαὶν μοῖρ' αἰ Μύμῃαι
 Αἰνιτῆαδ' οὐκ ἐνὶ κλύ' οὐδὲ
 Αἰρεῖται θυρ' λείγεσθαι φίον
 Ὅσ' οὐδ' αἰθερὰ νῆα τερπὶ μῦθ'.

Clann gairce eigeapna an Chláir
 A nimeac̃t rin ba lá leóin
 Sgan púil ne na tteac̃t go brát,
 Go péid̃ a bean na ttri mbó.

Dóinnall ó Dún-buíde na long
O'Súilleabáin nár éim glór
Féac gur éuit ran Spáin re cloídeam
Do péio a bean na tarrí mbó.